COUNTY OFFICERS RECOGNIZED FOR ANIMAL WELFARE EFFORTS

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Montgomery County, Virginia – Montgomery County's three Animal Control Officers were recently honored by Friends of Animal Care and Control, in recognition of the countless hours of service the Officers render to the citizens – and the animals – of Montgomery County.

The Animal Control Officers – Chief Harvey Waddell, Ray Helmick, and Scottie Richardson – each received a personalized, engraved, stainless steel travel mug. The mugs were presented to the Officers by FACC Board Members Jason Shelton and Rachel Heltz-Herman, at the regular meeting of FACC Advisory Board on April 13, 2006.

Waddell, Helmick, and Richardson have served as Montgomery County ACOs for a combined total of more than 16 years, enforcing regulations for poultry, livestock, and dangerous animals, controlling stray and wild animals, issuing animal licenses, investigating animal bite, rabies, and cruelty and abuse cases, and operating the County Animal Shelter on Cinnabar Road, where lost animals are returned to their owners and stray animals are adopted into new homes.

"Friends of Animal Care and Control is a group of volunteers who work for animal welfare, and support the efforts of local animal control agencies," says FACC Board Member Jason Shelton. "We're working with Montgomery County to establish a volunteer program to extend the Shelter's hours, and longer-term we work to support all aspects of animal welfare, including public education." The group numbers several dozen members locally. For more information, or to volunteer, visit the FACC web site at www.nrvanimalshelters.com/FACC.

The Animal Control Officers' recognition was inspired by a recent proclamation by the National Animal Control Association declaring April 9 through 15, 2006 as the first-ever "National Animal Control Appreciation Week". In a written statement, NACA expressed "appreciation to Animal Control agencies … (in) recognition for the important services these agencies provide" … and "hard-working and dedicated Animal Control Officers can finally be honored by having the whole community say 'thank you'."

The NACA announcement stated further that "Animal Control Officers … save lives by rabies prevention, protect helpless animals and pets that are rescued from injury, disease, and starvation, and give sanctuary to millions of homeless animals."

NACA's web site is www.nacanet.org.

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